values to about Rs. 50 lakhs per day; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to stop exploitation of bidi workers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) : Information regarding sale value of the rejected (chaant) bidis and payment of wages therefor is not available.

In a meeting recently convened by Ministry of Labour in which representatives of the State Governments, employers and employees participated, it was decided that the Bidi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Rules should be suitably amended to make provisions for return of rejected bidis to the workers free of cost. The State Governments were advised to bring about requisite amendments in the respective Bidi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Rules.

The Bidi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Amendment Bill, 1990 introduced in the Rajya Sabha, *inter-alia*, provides for the expeditious settlement of disputes relating to rejection of bidis.

Increase in the price of rice being supplied through PDS

538. SHRI M. M. JACOB: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of rice supplied through the public distribution system has been increased recently; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) and (b) The Central issue price of rice of all the three varieties viz. common, fine and superfine supplied through the public distribution system has been increased by Rs. 45/- per quintal from 25-6-1990 to absorb the increase of Rs. 25/- per quintal in the support price of paddy made from 1-10-1989, which, on an average, results in an increase of Rs. 47/- per quintal in the levy price of rice after taking into account out turn ratio of rice from paddy, procurement incidentals etc.

Price Index

539. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what had been the wholesale price index during the last three years in the month of June, year-wise figures;

(b) whether it is a fact that wholesale price index have reached the highest during June, 1990; if so, what steps are being taken by Government to contain this price rise;

(c) whether Government propose to appoint a study team immediately to suggest ways and means to check inflation in the country; and

(d) if so, by whem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) and (b) : The All Commodities Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for the month of June, 1990, June, 1989 and June, 1988 are as uder:

June 1990	—176.1
June 1989	—162.0
June 1988	—152.2

Government has accorded highest priority to check the rising trend in prices of essential commodities Both long-term and short-term measures are being taken for the purpose. The measures taken by the Government broadly include steps to increase the production of essential commodities which are in short supply; effective procurement and buffer stocking

operations of foodgrains; strengthening of Public Distribution System; monitoring of prices and availability situation; strict enforcement of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and other regulatory measures; augmenting domestic supplies through imports wherever necessary, to check any abnormal rise in prices.

Apart from the measures on the broad macro-economic front, specific measures have also been taken by the Government in respect of particular essential commodities under pressure, such as, edible oils, pulses, tea, sugar and cement etc.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Review of increase in the prices of commodities

540. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any review of the prices of different commodities in the market;

(b) if so, the details of the latest trend;

(c) whether the prices of edible oils including vanaspati are increasing substantially;

(d) if so, the reasons of the rise in the prices of these commodities;

(e) the steps taken to arrest the price rise; and

(f) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) Government are constantly reviewing the behaviour of prices of various essential commodities on the basis of Wholesale Price Indices and other available data.

(b) During the last six months ending 21-7-1990 (between weeks ending 20-1-90 and 21-7-90), the Wholesale Price Index of rice was higher by 8.2% as compared to an increase of 9.0% and 10.2% in the corresponding periods in 1989 and 1988 respectively; the index of sugar, tea, *jowar*, chillies, black pepper, *atta, maida* have declined, while kerosene and coke remained steady during this period. There has, however, been a significant rise in the case of oilseeds and edible oils.

(c) and (d): Yes, Sir. The main reasons for rise in prices of edible oils and vanaspati are due to the decline in production of oilseeds during 1989-90, pressure of consumer demand, demand and supply gap in edible oils, and constraint of foreign exchange to make larger imports.

(e) and (f): Government has accorded highest priority to check the rising trend in prices of essential commodities. Both long term and short term measures are being taken for the purpose. The measures taken broadly include steps to increase the production of essential commodities; effective procurement and buffer stocking operations of foodgrains, strengthening of Public Distribution System, monitoring of price and availability situation, strict enforcement of the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and other regulatory measures; and augmenting domestic supplies through imports (e.g. edible oils) subject to over all constraint of foreign exchange resources.

Increase in the price of edible oils and vanaspati ghee

541. SHRI PASUMPON THA. KIRUTTINAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what had been the price of edible oils and vanaspati ghee during the last three years, yearwise;

(b) what had been the corresponding increase of each when compared to